845 All these regulations[1] clearly show that, for the time being, the
184 mother of twins, like the widow, (I. p. 200) is regarded as outside
783 the pale of society. But her defilement is worse than that of the widow ; so, in order to be purified from it, the rite of *lahla khombo* (casting away the malediction) through which she must pass is much more severe. According to Mboza she must "deceive" four men one after the other, in the bush, all of whom will die. She hears that so and so says *djoo-djoo*, viz., becomes livid, that his body swells, that he is dead! She knows the reason. He has taken her defilement! Perhaps the fourth does not die but only becomes consumptive. These men have been pointed out to her by the divinatory bones. Each time she succeeds in performing the purification ceremony described in I. p. 205, she informs her medicine-man, who "prepares for her a vapour bath." Afterwards, she goes to reside at her parents' house, has relations with a lover, and gives birth to another child. Then her purification is complete, and her husband goes with 10/- to fetch her, and bring her home. The lover completed the removal of the "buhahla" i. e. the condition in which a mother of twins is. He has washed her (hlampsa). A new hut will be built for her, furnished with new utensils, and the ordinary family life will begin afresh.

845 As regards the twins themselves, they do not pass through
853 the ceremony of presentation to the moon (I. p. 52) as other children do. They are weaned earlier ; immediately after the reappearance of the menses the mother begins her *lahla khombo*, which at the same time is a *lumula*, a weaning of the children. They are then fed with goat's milk.

845 Twins are not liked by other people. They are looked upon as bad characters. When the little ones begin to crawl, and chance to go towards the other huts, people throw cinders at them and drive them away, saying : "These are children of Heaven. Be off! You annoy us!" If any ordinary child has a particularly bad disposition, they often say : "You are naughty! You are just like a twin!" — "Hahla dja karata" — "Twins are troublesome" is another common saying ; and if a child is really exceptionally difficult to deal with, people say : "It is a twin! You cannot do anything with it! (A dji koteki!)"

[1] [See pp. 433-435, Cat. 116 -- Analyst]

Special precautions are taken in respect to twins when they pay a mourning visit. One of the grave-diggers meets them at the entrance of the village and says : "Do not fear, Children of Heaven." He then puts some ashes on their heads and on their fontanelles. This is done because twins are feeble (ma ni bushapu) and the defilement might affect them more than other children. They must therefore be protected by smearing the middle of the head, and the "extremity of the tree of life," viz., the fontanelle, with a preventive. The mother also undergoes a similar treatment. She must prostrate herself near the hut of the deceased, at the place where the wall has been pierced to make an exit for the corpse. Then the grave-digger brings some live embers in a broken pot, pours a little water on to them, and dips his fingers into the water ; he then presses both his hands against the woman's belly and brings them round her waist, pressing them all the while against the skin, until they meet on the spine ; thus she is "cured inside" (dahiwa ndjen). This will prevent her from suffering from internal troubles, to which she, having given birth to Tilo, Heaven, is particularly liable. (Comp. I. p. 151) (1).

From this brief description of the customs connected with twins in most of the Thonga clans, it may be seen that their explanation is twofold : 1) The birth of twins is a death, consequently a defilement, indeed the worst of all defilements. Hence the *purificatory rites* which bear the character of *passage rites* : the mother is secluded and passes through a period of isolation, after which she is again admitted to society after a painful "casting away of her misfortune." 2) But the cause of the defilement is not an ordinary death, but Heaven. *She is Heaven* ; she is said to have

(1) Another category of persons bearing a special relation to Heaven are the *albinos*. Cases of albinism are not frequent amongst South African Natives, yet they are sometimes met with. They are called in Thonga *Khalandlati*, a word which means literally *charcoal-lightning*. It is believed that they have been burnt (hisa) by lightning in their mother's womb before their birth. "Ba tlalile, a ba wupfanga, ba bengiwi hi tilo," viz. "they are uncomplete beings, they are not ripe, they have been hated by Heaven" ; these are the terms in which they are described. They are not however regarded as taboo (yila), they merely inspire disgust (nyenya) (p. 83). As regards women suffering from this kind of disgrace, other women do not smear themselves with the same ochre as they, lest they should give birth to albinos ; they do not drink from the same cup. Men do not marry them, and in this respect they are classed with leper women and witches, who are also looked on as repugnant.

845 daha). Striking is frequently one of the rites of aggregation.
184 (See Van Gennep, *Rites de Passage*, p. 55). Let us remember that the Tembe clan is of Northern origin (I. p. 23) and has retained some customs which are different from those of the other Thongas (1).

2) Heaven and the "Nunu."

136 The following is a very extraordinary custom, and one which,
241 in many respects, greatly resembles those I have already described.
845 There is to be found, on the shores of Delagoa Bay, a small
772 Coleoptera belonging to the Alcides genus of the Cucurlionidæ
826 family. It has a proboscis-shaped mouth, a very hard carapace of half a centimetre in length, brown, and marked on each elytron with two longitudinal white bands. The Blacks call it the *nunu*. It is a scourge to the fields of beans and maize (much as cockchafers are with us). In December or January, when these insects begin to swarm, the chief men of the country order the diviners to throw the bones, and send the women to pick the "nunu" off the bean stalks. They gather them in "sala" shells. Then they choose (probably by casting lots) *a woman who has given birth to twins.*

(1) Amongst *the Hereros* a multiple birth is the happiest event which could possibly occur! The Rev. E. Dannert published in the *Capetown Folklore Journal* an account of the customs practised on such occasions by the Natives of this tribe, which occupies the Western side of Southern Africa, at about the same latitude as the Thongas. The father and mother are condemned to complete silence, under penalty of bringing a curse on those who speak to them. All the members of the tribe are convened and bring their cattle with them. The twins' family has to appear before the whole assembly, and is received with lamentations. Each individual must present himself to the parents, and make them a gift of beads, or other ornaments, in return for which the father and mother purify them by means of a certain powder. After this the father has the right of going from village to village, and claiming an ox from each one, as a kind of ransom. He becomes quite a rich man. This is the *kunga rite*, which we have also met with on many occasions amongst the Thongas (I. p. 124.). How can this diversity between the customs of the Hereros and those of most of the Thongas be explained? No doubt by this vague mysterious idea of Heaven, which is behind the religious conceptions of these tribes and in which all these rites originated. This celestial power, when it manifests itself, stupefies the Natives, for it causes "a death," entails a curse. With the Thongas it is the mother and children who are the objects of this malediction, hence the purifying ceremonies imposed upon them. With the Hereros, it is the whole tribe which is affected. The family into which the twins are born has been distinguished and honoured by this heavenly visitation, and collects for itself the fines which all must pay to regain the celestial favour!

village is at once removed. Leprosy is called *nhlulabadahi*, the disease which is stronger than the doctors. It is very much dreaded ; lepers are not, however, segregated ; they live in the village with other people and even attend beer-parties, but they bring their own mugs, whilst every other guest receives a drinking utensil from the master of the village.

Another disease which is believed to be contagious is "possession" by the *Bandjao spirits*. Should you pick up on the road some object which belonged to one of the possessed, his madness will jump to you (tlulela). — Epilepsy is also dreaded on that account. A nursing woman must not see any one suffering from an attack of this disease, or the child which is on her shoulders will become epileptic.

Speaking of the conception of disease, I must remind the reader of the fact that *sexual relations* between the inhabitants of the village are believed to aggravate the condition of the patient dwelling in it (I. p. 133, II. p. 358), and are consequently forbidden during epidemics and in any case of serious illness. Hence the precautions which convalescents must take of wearing the *sungi*, as we have just seen.

4) The special rites which mark the end of an illness throw much light on the Thonga conception of disease. A serious illness constitutes a marginal period either for the individual concerned, or, in the case of an epidemic, for the community, and the hondlola rite is the method by which the patient is reintegrated into society ; it clearly has the character of a passage rite. The rubbing with psanyi, the removal of the defilement of disease, the throwing away of the "timbhorola," the cutting of nails and hair, all these are rites of separation from the period of disease, whilst the feast of the hondlola day, and the resuming of sexual relations (1) are rites of reintegration. In the disease of possession, as we shall see it is the reintegration into the society of spirit-possessed persons and amounts to an initiation.

(1) We often hear of a Christian woman, who has gone to a heathen medicine-man for treatment, having sexual intercourse with him. We generally attribute this fact to immorality alone, but it was probably a part of the treatment, at the precise moment when sexual taboos were removed.

753 In the case of an epidemic, it is the whole clan which passes
184 through the marginal period, and all its members have to perform
755 the reintegration rites, by means of which they re-inter upon
783 normal life.

But these rites have another meaning as well. They aim at "dispersing the disease." In the hondlola proper, the particles which have fallen on the mat during the rubbing operation are cast away into an ants' nest; this is the *tumba*, which corresponds to the throwing away of all the "nsila", i. e. the "filth" of the small-pox patients at a cross-roads. In this case the body of the patient is also washed at that spot; this is likewise done at the conclusion of measles. The same idea underlies all these customs, that by their means the patient or clan will *definitely get rid of the disease*. Disease forms an organic whole, an important element of which consists of the dried perspiration of the patient, the dirt covering his skin, the implements he has used during his confinement, the dust of his hut, etc. All these are thrown either into an ants' nest to be disposed of there by the insects, or on to the road to be trampled under foot by travellers. The latter, by coming into contact with this filth, will at the same time take upon themselves the disease which it represents and carry it away into far distant countries. Thus the request of the medicine man will be granted, (I. p. 55, II. p. 393): "Let the bad blood go to Nkhabelene, to Shiburi... to the ends of the earth." I do not think that in this apparently hostile act of throwing the dust of a contaminated hut on to the road Thongas are actuated by the wish that travellers should be infected with the disease. Their principal aim is to disperse the contagion according to the principles of communionist and imitative magic. It is however dangerous to tread upon it. It is one of those "mathumo" which can cause disease.

000 The medical system of the Bantus is mingled to such an extent with superstition and error that very little reliance can be placed upon it. The question which I put at the beginning of this section is therefore very difficult to answer. What is the duty of the White Government in regard to the Native quacks? The ideal would be to replace them by fully qualified, civilised doctors. As this is impossible, let medical missionaries at least be encouraged, and their number increased, and

let us remember that, in the case of the exorcised, the hondlola
does not only mean the re-introduction of the patient into the 755
society of the healthy, but his reception into the society of the 756
magicians. It is the last act of *initiation* : he himself becomes a magician, a doctor able to treat those who are possessed. This new dignity is symbolised by the *shiphandje* (forked branch) which will be given to him to-day, as it is to medicine-men (p. 388), or diviners (See later on). It was Ñwatshulu who chose and cut the branch for Mboza from the tree called *shiralala*. He dug a hole in the back part of Mboza's hut, chewed his sungi or ndjao root, and blew against the foot of the branch before planting it in the hole. Then he made the branch firm in the ground, and hung to it the baskets full of drugs and calabashes full of medicinal powders which he gave to his disciple. This branch will be the drug store of the new magician, the place where he keeps all his magic drugs ; it will also be his *altar* (gandjelo), not the altar of the ancestor-gods, who have no part here, but that of the possessing spirits, to whom he will also henceforth address his worship. (Compare with Mankhelu's forked branch, letter D). This leads us on to the next division of the subject.

IV. *The new Condition of the Exorcised.*

It is interesting to note the stages in the process of initiation 756
through which the possessed passes in the different acts of his 184
treatment. The tambourine performance has provoked, or accentuated, the manifestation of his dual personality, viz., the person possessed and the spirit possessing. The baptism in the calabash has helped him to cross the sea and to reach the land beyond, the land of miracles and of magic powers! By the drinking of blood, he has become a superior being, a man who does not fear that which makes others tremble ; he has *thwaza*. This word is the same as that employed for the renewal of the moon (p. 306). ; like the moon, he has been born again ; a new light has appeared after a period of darkness. He has entered a new life. The period of convalescence, with its taboos, is his last trial ; by the hondlola he finally enters the society of the initiated.

756 Henceforth he will lead a special life, characterised by protective
184 and propitiatory rites, which tend to the development of his subliminal faculties.

1) Protective rites.

756 As soon as he was "born again" in the thwaza ceremony,
751 but to a still higher degree later on, after being elevated to the
789 dignity of the magician, the exorcised, having entered the mysterious world of those endowed with powers, becomes the butt of all his colleagues in the magical arts ; first the baloyi, the witches, who *try* him, to see if he is able to discover their evil deeds, and secondly the other magicians, who are annoyed at seeing a rival ready to dispute their practice with them. So he must be continually on his guard ; in the evening, especially, he must protect himself against their nightly charms. The great protective medicine is a pellet made of the powder of many roots, which have been burned and bound together with fat taken from the bowels of a goat. The first of these roots comes from a tree called *mabophe*, found in the Bilen country. This has the power of tying (bopha, in Zulu, means to tie) the knees of the wizards who come during the night, so that they will be found in the morning, stark naked, in the hut of the exorcised. The *nulu* root seems to be used for the same purpose ; the *nsala*, which also enters into the composition of the protective pellets, rather aims at ensuring the success of the treatment undertaken by the new gobela ; as its fruits are plentiful (p. 16), so will the possessed come in great numbers to the doctor. The pellet is used for medical treatment, but the same drugs are also kept in the form of powder, in a piece of reed, or in the calabashes hanging from the forked pole. Every night the exorcised swallows a pinch, and throws another pinch on the fire in his hut. This will prevent enemies from entering, or make them prisoners. Before eating, he must also protect himself by chewing (phora) a little of the *manono*, a kind of antiseptic or anti-witchcraft root as big as a stick, which he always carries with him ; this is the special *luma* (I. p. 146) of the exorcised. Who knows if his food has not been poisoned by the malpractices of his rivals?